DEC 11 1961

The Congregationalist

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Photo courtesy Charles H. Bernhardt, Palos Verdes Estates, California

It came upon a midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth
To touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

And ye beneath life's crushing load
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow, —
Look now, for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
O, rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.

VOLUME 4 **DECEMBER, 1961** **NUMBER 11**

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." — Galatians 5:1

The Congregationalist

is published and circulated monthly except July by the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches of the United States. Rev. Joseph J. Russell, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts, Eastern Field Representative and Editor. Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., Executive Secretary, 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

"TO ENERGIZE CONGREGATIONALISM"

What can be done to energize Congregationalism? While this question has a contemporary ring, it is not new. A group of ministers asked it almost a hundred years ago. In reply to the question, pastors and deacons of the Churches in the Boston area were assembled by letters missive and the Boston Congregational Club was formed. The Boston brethren found their experiment so successful that they urged the formation of other clubs about the country. From 1870 to 1920 Congregational Clubs flourished as centers of culture, fellowship and information. A number of factors were responsible for their decline, not the least of which was unimaginative programming.

A Revival of Congregational Clubs

With adaptations to our generation Congregational Clubs might well be revived to promote the general interests of Congregationalism and to promote the cause of Christ as represented by the Congregational Churches. In this day of modern transportation numerous regional clubs with more frequent meetings might well bring Congregationalists together for mutual encouragement.

A Creative Forum

If the modern Congregational Club is to be an effective instrument of fellowship it must learn a lesson from the history of its predecessors. The early Congregational Clubs flourished most when they demanded participation from their members. In our more sophisticated age, passive programming will not do. Imported speakers and audio-visuals will not be adequate. In this age of mass man and his organizations we have a ministry to encourage local creativity. The modern Congregational Club must exact intellectual obligations and dues of fellowship.

One of the ways in which it can promote intellectual and spiritual culture is through the encouragment of cooperative individualism among the pilgrims of the Congregational Way. Men and women who have learned the fine art of self-discipline are sorely needed if humanity is to survive and to realize its potentialities as the family of God. Every Congregational Club is called to an adventure in friendship which nurtures responsible freedom in religious fellowship. Witnessing to our Christian faith in such a context we will discover that no mere glorification of the past will suffice; we must also recognize the demand of a dedication to the future.

Arvel M. Steece, Ph.D., Old Saybrook, Conn.

THE TIME DRAWS NEAR

The time draws near when we shall once again keep Christmas. With one accord we take time from the urgent business of the hour to make ready for the day when we shall sing "Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come."

It is right that we should do this. The angel's song of "Peace on earth, good will to men" is the deepest yearning in the hearts of good men everywhere. The happy laughter of children stirs a response within us and calls to resonance, chords long dormant in the soul. The gifts we give are symbols of the gifts we have received. In bygone years, in the childhood of the race, God gave men a world of beauty and wonder, crammed with surprise packages hidden in ocean, valley, forest and mountain.

Mankind's stocking o'erflowed with presents for each person; a body, marvellous in its mechanical perfection, its chemical balance, and its incredible resilience; a mind, alive with creative possibilities; a soul, conscious of wonder and of awe, capable of friendship and crowned with divine understanding. It is right that we keep Christmas.

It is right that we sing "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come." The greatest gift, the gift that most stirs the imagination, is the gift of pure life. What one of us would consider any material present equal to the gift of child life in our midst?

What one of us would take any material gift in exchange for a stainless soul? Not one! The joy of Christmas is the happy recognition that the Lord *has* come, the wondrous gift has been given.

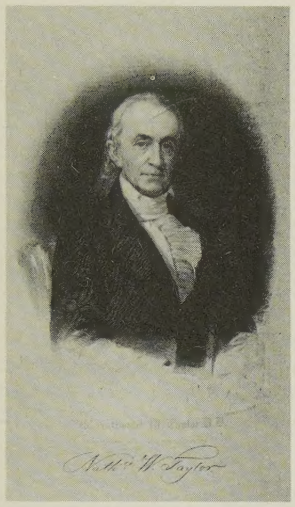
And so we make ready to keep Christmas. The ancient story comes again upon our ears.

(This Christmas Guest Editorial was written by one of our well known National Association ministers. With it goes a sincere Christmas greeting to all our people.)

FAMOUS CONGREGATIONALISTS

Arvel M. Steece, Ph.D., Old Saybrook, Connecticut

1786—NATHANIEL WILLIAM TAYLOR—1858



Nathaniel William Taylor was born in New Milford, Connecticut, June 23, 1786 and died in New Haven, Conn., March 10, 1858. He graduated at Yale in 1807 and then spent a year in Albany, N.Y., as a private tutor. Returning to New Haven he spent four years studying under President Timothy Dwight and also served as his private secretary the first two years. He met Lyman Beecher and their lifelong friendship began.

Taylor was licensed to preach August 10, 1810. He was ordained April 8, 1812, and installed pastor of the First Church (Center Church), New Haven and served until 1822 when he was appointed a professor in the theological seminary at Yale where he taught until his retirement in 1857. His pastorate was marked by revivals in 1815, 1816, 1820, and 1821. He engaged in controversy with the Episcopalians. In company with Dwight and Beecher he sought unsuccessfully to defend the Standing Order against the demands of sectarianism and democracy.

As a seminary professor, Taylor was influential in the modification of Calvinism and is credited with leadership in what came to be known as the "New Haven Theology". The revivalism of Dwight influenced Taylor's Old Calvinist background and he endeavored to expand the "whosoever will" of the revivalists into "a genuine theory of free agency in man" set forth in terms of moral government. During the Unitarian controversy the Taylorites posed as the champions of Calvinist orthodoxy. They were challenged by the conservatives. In 1828 Taylor presented his *Concio ad Clerum* which was intended as a defense and exposition of his viewpoint, yet occasioned further attack and put the proponents of the New Haven Theology on the defensive.

Taylor held that God demands only rational faith of rational beings. In the eyes of the conservatives this was to forsake revealed religion. Taylorism was one factor in the disruption of the Presbyterian church since many of the New School men were sympathetic to it while the Old School men held a more conservative Calvinism. His thought divided Connecticut Congregationalists into Taylorites and Tylerites and the latter founded Hartford seminary. Softening the harsher elements of Calvinism, Taylor prepared the way for the rise of "progressive orthodoxy" within Congregationalism. The standard modern biography is: Mead, Sidney Earl. **Nathaniel William Taylor 1786-1858 A Connecticut Liberal.** University of Chicago Press, 1942.

(Photo reproduced by John G. Towns, Holbrook, Mass.)

For Your Christmas Giving

The editorial "The Time Draws Near" on another page of this number of THE CONGREGATIONALIST reminds us that the gifts we give at Christmas are symbols of the great gifts we have received. As we Congregational Christians approach the great celebration of the Nativity, we should remember that among the great gifts God has given us is the heritage of freedom.

Some of us come from long lines of Congregational ancestors. Others have recently joined a Church of the Congregational Way. In any case, we know that this membership is a precious possession. May we suggest two ways in which you can at this Christmas time show your gratitude for what you have received through your membership in a free Church.

The first is to send a special gift to the National Association, either for the support of the growing organization itself or for some of the new Churches which it is sponsoring. Remember that if you give to a missionary project through the National Association, every cent of your gift is used for the designated purpose. That which you give to the National Association itself will help with the many expenses of the organization, including the administration of the Missionary and Church Extension projects.

Please send your contributions to the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches, 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin, stating whether your remittance is to be used for the Association itself or for a missionary cause.

The second suggestion is that you send to Congregational friends and relatives the monthly periodical of the National Association, THE CONGREGATIONALIST. Through this magazine they may be kept informed of the progress of our Churches and the work we are doing together. In it they will find articles of interest and value to freedom-loving Christians today, editorials, devotional columns, letters and other features.

If you send the names of ten subscribers, the rate is $1.00 each per year. *The paper will be mailed direct to each subscriber.* Those whose names are received before Christmas will receive the December issue free in addition to the eleven issues (there is no July issue) for 1962. Please send your lists of subscribers and remittance to Rev. Joseph J. Russell, Editor, 61 East Street, Melrose 76, Massachusetts or to the National Association, 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

THE LAY MINISTRY

Harry R. Butman, D. D., Los Angeles, California

(Continued From November, 1961)

The Need of the Churches

In recognition of the pulpit needs of small Churches, and the particular need for continuing the Congregational Way in the face of the departure of a large number of trained ministers into a new denomination, the Commission on the Ministry of the National Association has appointed a subcommittee on Lay Preachers and Small Churches, which, in cooperation with the Department of Pastoral Relations, has been giving thought to the urgent matter of the lay ministry.

Their findings were presented to the Annual Meeting at Cheyenne, and with such modifications as were necessary, will be circulated among the Churches. A brochure of suggestions, procedures, and study courses, designed to be helpful to ordained pastors, laymen who desire to preach, and to Churches unable to employ a full-time minister, will be available this fall.

What Churches will be benefited by lay preachers? There are two major classes, the first being those older Churches which have passed the days of their strength. These are mostly in rural areas, though there is also an inner city problem. The second class is made up of the new free Churches which are coming into being as a result of the creation of the United Church of Christ. In many areas there are Congregationalists who cannot in conscience sit in congregations which are mere parts of a national church, with creeds and presbyterial control — a church which in a few years may itself be a part of an even larger church with an episcopal form of government. These minorities will be forced to gather themselves into Congregational Churches, even though it will be necessary for them to travel some distance for the privilege of worshipping in a free Church. It is the clear duty of those who are the custodians of the Congregational Way to provide preachers for these infant Churches which may lack financial resources.

In some cases a group of neighboring Congregational pastors could assume the burden in rotation on Sabbath afternoons, but it would be better if such a Church could find a stated lay preacher to give it continuity of thought at common hours of worship. In the probable event that some of these young Churches will not be able to afford a building, it will be necessary to return to the New Testament pattern of a Church in a house, ministered to by laymen. (Romans 16: 3-5; Col. 4: 15).

The need of the Churches should not be equated merely with the desire of Congregationalists to see their distinctive witness continued. The yearbooks of great denominations list far too many inactive Churches. The concrete reality behind the statistics may be seen in town and country: the little frame Church at the Crossroads, its paint peeled by prairie sun and wind, the grass tall in the front yard; the shabby brick building in the slums, its windows grimy and its shutters sagging. The dispirited people who dwell near these Churches are too few to employ the strong leader who might bring them out of poverty and weakness; or it may be that the environment is too adverse to be overcome by any pastor, however capable. But these houses of God could know once more the sound of song and sermon if laymen from the stronger Churches of the vicinage, or even from the remnant of the membership itself, could be inspired, trained, and commissioned to preach. There is an interior missionary work still to be done in America; spiritual frontiers have nothing to do with geography and boundaries; not Africa alone is dark. The need for evangelists is as acute now as it was when Jesus lifted up his eyes to the fields white with the bleached ripe grain and said, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest." (Luke 10:2)

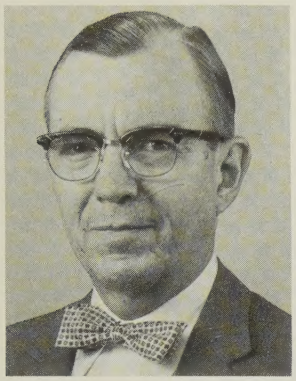
Who Shall Preach?

Who shall be the lay preachers? Some will be young men in college, preaching before they have studied theology and had hands laid on their heads; others will be older men to whom the call has come late. But the lay ministry will not be primarily composed of either students or men of delayed vocation. The lay preacher will ordinarily be a man who does not intend to seek formal ordination, but who has a deep desire to serve God by proclaiming the Gospel on the Sabbath, and by assuming responsibilities spiritually more demanding than those of an officer in a local Church. An analogy may be found in the Tertiary Franciscans, those devout Catholic laymen who cannot enter the monastic life but who take vows more severe than those asked of a member of the Roman Church. Among the possibilities for lay preachers must be included mature women with wisdom to share and time to serve. Devout and gifted members of Pilgrim Fellowship and Christian Endeavor are potential recruits for the company of lay preachers. The wise pastor will not despise their youth, but will sound the trumpet before them, and offer courses of study and opportunity for action for those who volunteer. Lay preachers will have a measure of training and will take their work with great seriousness, for it is an awesome thing to stand up and preach the Word of God. But above and beyond their discipline, fidelity, and personal competence, they must have a call of God. Precisely as an ordained minister must experience the inner invitation and compulsion from God before he is set apart for his sacred labor, so must the lay preacher. He dare not preach out of mere itch for prominence or personal fulfillment; his sanction is the inner Voice. The call gives the lay preacher a dignity of office which matches that of the ordained man, and endows him with the same lawful pride which enabled the prophet to answer the angry priest who questioned his credentials: "Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah; I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore

Continued bottom page 5

A WORD FROM THE MODERATOR

Laurance E. Frost, Brooklyn, New York



Laurance E. Frost

Ever since the Churches voted on the Basis of Union it has been entirely clear that the formation of the United Church of Christ in the proposed pattern would split the Congregational family. That tragic break has now occurred. We miss the companions of the Congregational Way who have turned their backs on it. Some of our best friends are among them. Ironically, this dividing action was promoted in the name of unity.

We hope for the day when our relations with this new denomination can be as cordial as those we have long enjoyed with other denominations, but before that can happen there are some tough questions to be settled. Questions of legal ownership of property, questions of keeping faith with donors of gifts for specified purposes, questions of personal liability of trustees, questions of the future of agencies for joint endeavors — these are questions that are inevitable in the separation. Settling them cannot always be a pleasant process. Court action will sometimes be the only way to get suitable answers.

According to the latest reports, two-thirds of the Congregational Christian Churches in the United States have joined the United Church, now comprising its Congregational wing. Of the remainder, some are still undecided. But a growing number of us are determined to continue the distinct Congregational fellowship, however reduced in size it may be.

The Congregational Way still has rich contributions to make to Christian progress. While Protestants have always fostered the tradition of individual thinking, Congregationalists have given it particular emphasis. We have reinforced it with a method of organization that tends to shield our ministers from external pressures. The Congregational branch of the United Church, however, has allowed this safeguard to be thrown aside. In its place they have permitted machinery to be erected for the central control of their ministry.

We continuing Congregationalists will jealously guard the freedom of conscience of our ministers and people. We have learned to respect differing opinions without forgetting the importance of having sound opinions. We know that men do not think alike. We recognize that the only way for men to find truth is earnestly to look for it along such paths as may be open to them. So we have in our Congregational family many shades of theological viewpoints. We seek not uniformity of opinion but unity of purpose. We follow one Master and seek to know His Way and do it.

In these critical days we have much work to do. Our National Association is expanding its program as fast as circumstances permit. Our staff is devoted and alert. Much splendid volunteer work is being done by our unpaid commissions and committees, but even this needs monetary support for travel expenses and for the tools with which to work. It is up to us, all of us in the member Churches, to produce the needed funds.

Let's not mourn for our old associates who have turned away to the United Church, nor upbraid them for their choice. For us, the way is clear — straight ahead!

THE LAY MINISTRY, *Continued from page 4*

fruit; and the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." (Amos 7:14, 15).

The Work and the Reward

The lay preacher will have great reward for his work. It will not be in terms of salary; indeed, his labor will commonly be done at financial cost to himself. But he will not permit himself to be lightly esteemed because he is not a professional. If the amount of money received for preaching is to be the touchstone of its usefulness or excellence, then it might well be asked what wage Christ got for the Sermon on the Mount.

The lay preacher must be classed with the Lollards and the Poor Men of Lyons, and all the other Christians (often persecuted to the shedding of blood by ordained priests) who have spoken the Word without pay and with no ambition save to do their work well for the glory of God. If they are called of God, and do their particular task faithfully, men will term them unskilled amateurs, less in worth than the learned and ordained, only because such scornful men have forgotten the truth about spiritual gifts and toils: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord." (1 Cor. 12:4)

If a man desires the office of lay preacher, he desires a good work, and for that work he will receive a good recompense. He will find his preparation no less arduous than his conscientious ordained brother finds it; he will experience the frustration of attempting to clothe even simple truths in language of clarity and beauty. He will know the despair born of trying to say unsayable things, and he will come down from the pulpit on many a Sabbath with a sense of failure. He will often wonder where his sermon is coming from, and why God has called one so unfitted for the task. But in his moments of dryness and doubt, let him also remember that he stands by a very deep well, the Bible, and that no man born of woman was ever wholly sufficient for the work.

Yet, in rich compensation for his toil and time and anxiety he will have jewelled moments when he realizes that he is fortunate beyond the lot of most men, for he has the God-granted grace, ratified by the acceptance of Christian men and women, to preach the riches of the Gospel of Christ.

WOMEN'S WORK

MRS. ROBERT E. COLLINS, Chairman
1014 FLORAL DRIVE, S.E., GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

The Season of Advent

Mrs. Warren S. Archibald — Hartford, Connecticut

In the seventh century the Church set apart the month of December as a special season of preparation for the great festival of Christmas — "for the coming of the Christ into the life of the world." It was observed as a time of penitence and of special prayer — "that we might be made ready and worthy to receive Him."

The four Sundays preceding Christmas Day were included in this season and the Sunday nearest November 30th (either before or after) was designated Advent Sunday. This year of 1961, December 3rd is Advent Sunday; the 10th and 17th lead up to the climax of the preparation season on December 24th.

The "Collect" in the "Prayer Book" for the Sunday before Advent, which in our country is often the Sunday nearest our celebration of Thanksgiving Day, is the fine prayer: "Stir up, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the wills of Thy faithful people, that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by Thee be plenteously rewarded, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." Hence this Sunday is known by some who are familiar with the "Christian Year" as "Stir-up Sunday." How fitting it is, just after our season of Thanksgiving, to pray that our wills be stirred up to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit — "Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance," as we prepare our minds and hearts for the coming of Christ.

When, against this background of the ancient purpose of the Advent season, we place the present-day trends of the commercialism and secularism of the "just 21 days before Christmas" advertising, we must feel deeply and sincerely that there is need for teaching and discipline in the "art" of preparation for Christmas in order to counteract the temptation to waste strength and time and thought.

Material at Hand

Praises be that there is so much material at hand to help every one whether for private devotions or "Worship Services" in group meetings or in Church School classes or in the Sunday congregations. First of all, we must read over and over the story of The Shepherds and of The Nativity as told by Saint Luke, and the story of The Wise Men in Saint Matthew, and find in them again the great ideas, so beautifully expressed, which have influenced Christian thought for "generation after generation":

1. The Glory of God shone round about them.
2. Fear not.
3. Good tidings of great joy which shall be to *all* people.
4. A Saviour which is Christ the Lord.
5. Glory to God and on earth Peace, Good-will to Men.
6. Let us go even unto Bethlehem.
7. And they came with haste.
8. They made known abroad the saying which was told them.
9. Mary pondered these things in her heart.
10. Emmanuel — God with us.
11. They rejoiced with exceeding great joy.
12. They presented unto Him gifts.

A great wealth of prose and poetry has been created out of these few words gathered from the stories told in "Matthew" and "Luke." Every public library would contain anthologies of Christmas stories and poems. Such books are good gifts for any age and can be had at any good book store.

But even more wonderful than the prose and poetry is the music that has been inspired by the great gift of God's love to all men. More of this treasure is available in our homes and churches today than ever before. Every home can possess at least a Book of Carols, whether the home be a single room or a palace. Every hymn book used in churches contains some of the great Christian hymns which every congregation can easily sing; choirs are becoming more and more familiar with inspiring anthems; recordings of famous musicians of all countries can be rented or bought; and if one is so fortunate as to be able to attend a concert of a great oratorio, then indeed one can enter into the spirit of those who hear angels sing.

The Keynote — "Come"

A study of the Advent and Christmas music shows that the keynote is "come." Just see how often it is used in the familiar carols:

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

"Come and worship — worship Christ the newborn King"

"O Come to us, abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel"

"All poor men and humble — all lame men who stumble
Come, haste ye, nor feel ye afraid."

"No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in."

"O come little children with hurrying feet
To Bethlehem hasten the Christ-child to greet."

"O come to my heart Lord Jesus
There is room in my heart for Thee"

"Love came down at Christmas
Love all lovely — Love Divine"

"Joy to the world! the Lord is come"

The great composer of the oratorio "The Messiah," George Friedrich Handel, seems to have felt the inspiration of this word of invitation, for after using the prophetic words from Isaiah (according to the custom in Advent Services) as an introduction to the nativity story and the "Gloria," "First Part" ends with the poignantly beautiful music to which he relates the great invitation: "Come unto Him all ye that labour and are heavy laden and He will give you rest."

There is no magic about these days of Advent, these shortest days of the year, but multitudes have testified that they have been given a blessing so powerful that they were constrained not only to receive it, but to keep it to make every common day glad. It all depends on the spirit each one brings as his gift, whether or not he can receive "new thoughts of God — new hopes of Heaven," whether he can say — rejoicing:

"Just as I am Thou wilt receive
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because Thy promise I believe
O Lamb of God, I come, I come."

Congregational Bookshelf

Rev. Royal G. Davis, Los Angeles, California

The year 1662 marked the establishment of a completely united Church of Christ for the people of England. The Act of Uniformity issued by Parliament was intended to create Christian unity and destroy the costly evils of dissent. At last Great Britain would obey the prayer of our Lord, that they all may be one! Every type of scheming on the part of the church officials would be justified to achieve that high resolve.

The year 1662 produced the exact opposite. Two thousand ministers refused to sell their convictions. Two thousand clergymen refused to be party to such a scheme. They were born Protestants; they continued to protest.

Why were such men opposed? Some denied that an act of uniformity had solid Biblical foundations. Some resented the political machinations by which it was brought about. Some doubted the value of church union on the basis of a single form of worship, single type of ecclesiastical government and single statement of belief. Some feared that tender consciences would find no freedom of expression within an authoritarian church. And at least a few were disgusted by the controversial secular purposes for which the united Church of England was conceived.

Rooted In Faith contains an historical study of the Act of 1662 and what it meant for British religious life. Written by H. G. Healey of Cambridge for the Congregational, Baptist and Presbyterian Churches, this book presents a judicious survey of the past and suggestions for today. A plan to create one faith, one Church and one system of government actually became the major reason for Protestantism, Non-conformity, Independency and Dissent. The author gives just enough evidence to let us evaluate for ourselves the latest versions of the act of 1662.

(Independent Press, Farringdon St., London EC 4, cost 9/6d)

NEWS NOTES

Pennsylvania Association Pilgrim Fellowship Camp, Franklin, Penna.

Anniversary at Michigan Church. The 75th Anniversary of the founding of the Congregational Church at Merrill, Michigan, is being observed. The Church was gathered on December 27, 1886, with nine members. The first pastor was Rev. A. A. Wall. The Church now has 198 members and is being served by Rev. Ward K. Klopp.

Youth House in Use at Oregon City. The Atkinson Memorial Congregational Church, Oregon City, Oregon, Rev. Horace L. Bachelder, pastor, is now using new rooms in the Youth House, which have been added largely through the work of members of the Church.

Our Cover Picture. The choirs shown on our cover this month are those of the Congregational Church of the Messiah, Los Angeles, California. The choir directors are Miss Delita Willoughby and Mrs. B. F. Hagie. Dr. Harry R. Butman is pastor.

MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION

ANOTHER NEW CHURCH BEGINS BUILDING

The First Congregational Church of Anaheim, California recently conducted impressive ground breaking ceremonies for their new worship center on the church site at 515 North Placentia Avenue.

From left to right:

Alfred Fikse, Jr.; Claude L. Senefeld; Robert Shanks; the Rev. David Deshler; Mayor A. J. Schutte; the Rev. Dr. Harry Butman; the Rev. Walter J. Vernon; Mrs. W. J. Vernon; the Rev. Chester Ferris; the Rev. Fred Niedringhaus; Mrs. Laura Tucker; and Chaplain S. J. Vernon.

Assisting in the actual breaking of the ground were members of the official Church boards and the Sunday School in addition to those mentioned above: Mr. Charles Ganger, Chairman of the Board of Christian Education; Mr. John Spousta, Chairman of the Board of Deacons and Deaconesses; Mr. William B. Cook, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Trustees; Mrs. Merel Langford, President of the Women's Fellowship; Mr. Delos Lowell, President of the Men's Fellowship; Miss Lynne Francis of the Pilgrim Fellowship Youth Group; and Patricia Lovato and Everett Ratliff, Jr. of the Sunday School.

Also participating were Alfred Fikse, Jr., Fikse Brothers, Artesia, building contractors who will be constructing the building; and Claude L. Senefeld, of Orr, Strange, Inslee & Senefeld, Architects, Los Angeles. A special guest was Mrs. Laura Tucker whose family in 1870 originally settled the property which is the location of the present church.

Anticipating the completion of the new worship center within six months, the church is presently meeting in the original ranch buildings with Morning Worship Services conducted at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. each Sunday and Sunday School at 9:30 a.m. Visitors are always welcome.

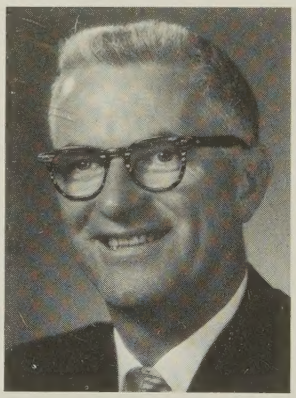
The afternoon's program began with the Call to Worship and Invocation given by the Rev. Chester Ferris, Congregational minister, retired, with words of welcome extended to the large number in attendance by Gerald L. Templeton, Church Moderator.

Guests who brought special greetings from their respective organizations included: The Honorable A. J. Schutte, Mayor of the City of Anaheim; the Rev. David Deshler, Vice President, Anaheim Ministerial Union; Mr. Robert Shanks, President of the Association of Christian Churches of Anaheim. Special messages of congratulations were read from the Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., Executive Secretary, and the Rev. Raymond A. Waser, Vice Moderator of the National Association of Congregational Christian Churches; and Mrs. George Griffith, who together with her family, donated the present buildings and property to the church.

Charles C. Hord, Chairman of the Building Committee, gave pertinent remarks concerning the building program. The Scripture Reading was given by the Rev. Dr. Harry R. Butman, Minister of the Congregational Church of the Messiah, Los Angeles.

The Rev. Walter J. Vernon, Minister of the church, led the congregation in the Litany of Dedication and the Rev. Fred Niedringhaus, Minister of the First Congregational Church of Santa Ana, gave the Prayer of Dedication. Chaplain Samuel J. Vernon, U.S. Army, Retired, and father of the Church's minister, offered the Benediction.

PASTOR BEGINS ALASKA WORK



The First Congregational Christian Church of Anchorage, Alaska, which is the only Church of our fellowship in the 49th State, has welcomed its new pastor, Rev. Gerald Churchill, and Mrs. Churchill. On Sunday afternoon, October 1 the new congregation met in Trinity United Presbyterian Church to greet the Churchills. The topic of the first sermon was "The Church of Our Dreams."

Mr. Churchill came to Anchorage from an eleven year pastorate in Redlands, California. An alumnus of Ripon College, Wisconsin, and Chicago Theological Seminary, he looks forward eagerly to work in the new Church.

The First Congregational Church of Anchorage was gathered in the home of one of its charter members in the summer of 1960, when Dr. and Mrs. Howell D. Davies were visiting in that city. It has grown rapidly in numbers and in spirit, and with the devoted work of its pastor, further progress is expected.

As one of the projects of the Missionary Society of the National Association, this northernmost outpost of our fellowship deserves the hearty support of all our people. Contributions designated for the Anchorage Church may be sent to "The Missionary Society," 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

Continued bottom page 9

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
PILGRIM FELLOWSHIP

VISION AND RESPONSE

A great eagerness shone in the faces of the young people. Great excitement filled the room and held them at the edges of their chairs. All ears were tuned to the words of the radiant-faced gentleman upon whom all eyes were glued.

"Yes, all the young men of our community had been imprisoned," he continued. "There was sadness in every heart, on every face, in every home. There was to be no pardon so most had no hope. All night we agonized and prayed and stormed heaven's gates seeking a way. What would we do? What could we do? What would you do?" he asked the intent young men and women around him, searching their faces for response.

"Gradually as I prayed the darkness and dread within my soul were lifted. At dawn an answer came. I went quickly to the place beneath the stairs where were buried a number of old and precious coins. Turning them over in the early morning light, I fingered them carefully, thinking of their value, of their significance, of the events that had brought each one to me. Then lifting them in prayer I said, 'Lord, only as these are used according to Thy will are they of value.'

"The prison captain and I visited long. We spoke of war and peace, of life and death, of men and history. 'I can see that you are a man of principle and conviction, captain,' I said. 'I know that you would not want to be responsible for the death of these innocent young men. I know that it is within your power to secure their release. Knowing you to be a man of honor, I give you this rare coin, the historic significance of which you, as a well-read student of coins will understand and appreciate, as a token of my trust, indeed, of the trust we all place in you.' "

The rapt expressions on the young people's faces drew him on.

"There followed two days of prayer and meditation. Our church family stayed close together, encouraging and comforting one another and by our concern and prayer being led to draw others into our circle. The Lord seemed to be strengthening us to strengthen others. His name be praised!

"The morning of the third day I went again to see the captain who received me promptly. There was a long silence between us after the officer closed the door and we sat down. I prayed fervently that God would guide me whatever news I was to receive.

" 'The men will be released at noon,' the captain said.

" 'God bless you,' I said shaking his hand, feeling a great lump in my throat and a great welling up within. 'God bless you.' "

The circle of young people bowed their heads to pray with Pastor Zikas, saintly shepherd of the Evangelical Christian Church in Alexandroupolis, Greece. And the Holy Spirit seemed to touch each one to teach: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

John 3:16 (K.J.)

(This is the second "Vision and Response" article on young people and missions, by Miss Ellen Gray of Hartford, Connecticut.)

MISSIONS AND CHURCH EXTENSION, *Continued*

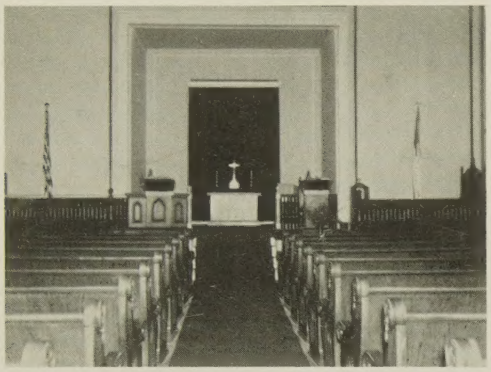
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU

The Missionary Society of the National Association has many home and overseas projects for which support is sought. An example is the Berea Bible Institute of Hong Kong, ably staffed by the Rev. Benjamin Chen and his associates. With the influx of refugees from the Mainland, the Institute has established several churches and schools in outlying districts. Transportation to and from these outposts and the Institute is a problem which could be solved by the acquisition of the bus type vehicle pictured here. The cost is $1000, about one third of the price if new. Churches or individuals interested in supporting this or other projects are invited to get in touch with the Missionary Society at 176 West Wisconsin Avenue, Milwaukee 3, Wisconsin.

STATE AND REGIONAL FELLOWSHIPS

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL MEETING

One hundred eighty people from 57 Churches in the New England states, with visitors from California, Georgia, Minnesota, New York and Wisconsin met on October 16 and 17 at Wolfeboro, New Hampshire for two days of fellowship and inspiration. Clear Autumn weather and beautiful foliage added to the joy of the gathering which had been planned by a committee appointed at a meeting in Boston last June.



Interior, First Christian Church, Wolfeboro

Registration early Monday afternoon at the First Christian Church was accompanied by a coffee hour. The opening devotional service was led by the Rev. Edward W. Cantwell, pastor, after which the following temporary officers were elected: Moderator, Robert B. Easton, D.M.D. of Norway, Maine; Secretary, Mrs. Nancy West of Hancock, New Hampshire, and Treasurer, Mr. James W. Sherman of Enfield, Connecticut.

Interesting reports on the work of the National Association were given by Dr. Henry David Gray of Hartford, Connecticut (Pilgrim Fellowship), Rev. George W. Brown, Jr. of Fall River, Massachusetts (Christian Education) and Mrs. Arthur J. Benoit of Dunbarton, New Hampshire (Women's Work). After a period of fellowship, dinner was served by the women of the Church.

The evening worship service was led by Rev. Charles H. Hall of Machiasport, Maine, followed by an inspiring address by Dr. Henry David Gray of Hartford.

The Tuesday sessions in the First Congregational Church opened at 9:00 with a business meeting. It was voted that the temporary officers should serve for a year and that the Moderator appoint an Executive Committee to arrange a meeting for the Autumn of 1962 and plan the program.

Following a worship service led by Rev. C. Shannon Morgan of Pittsfield, New Hampshire, Dr. Arthur A. Rouner of Brooklyn, New York, spoke on "The Congregational Reformation." Reports on State Fellowship organizations were given by Rev. Lewis A. Chase for Maine, Rev. Arthur W. Childs for New Hampshire, Rev. Howard E. Munson for Massachusetts and Rev. Roy Gilmour Pavy for Connecticut.

First Congregational Church, Wolfeboro

An address by Rev. Neil H. Swanson, Jr., Executive Secretary of the National Association, and a closing devotional service led by Rev. Kroum S. Jordan of West Medway, Massachusetts, brought the formal sessions to a close. The women of First Congregational Church then served luncheon and the delegates departed for their homes with renewed zeal for maintaining and advancing the free Way of the Congregational Christian Churches.

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION ORGANIZED

On Sunday, October 8, 1961, delegates from twenty-six Congregational Christian Churches met at the Saranac Community Church of Saranac, Michigan. The meeting was opened by Dr. J. P. Karr of the Arbor Grove Congregational Church of Jackson, and Dr. Bruce Masselink, pastor of Mayflower Congregational Church of Grand Rapids, offered the Constituting Prayer.

For temporary officers Dr. John W. Claxton of Plymouth Church, Lansing, was elected moderator and Rev. Ward K. Klopp of Merrill, Michigan was elected Scribe for the meeting.

Permanent officers chosen are: Moderator, George V. Bohman, Ph.D., Royal Oak; Vice-Moderator, Rev. Bruce Masselink; Secretary, Rev. Clarence Hanscom, Saugatuck; Treasurer, Mr. Frederick MacLean, First Church, Detroit. Rev. Howard E. Bull was elected Chairman of the Committee on Church and Pastoral Relations.

An outstanding feature of the program was the keynote address by Rev. Malcolm K. Burton of the Pontiac Church. He referred to the volume of addresses delivered at the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Michigan Congregationalism, calling special attention to the fact that the problems confronting Congregationalism then are very similar to those confronting Congregationalism today.

The Articles of Association and By-Laws as amended were adopted as the working basis of operation, the roll-call vote of the Churches represented by delegates registered 22 Churches voting approval, 2 abstaining and three not voting.

(For lack of space, accounts of other state or regional meetings have been held over for our next issue.)

OUR DEVOTIONAL COLUMN

Robert E. Sterenborg, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Theme for the Month: "YOUR GREATEST GIFT" — Suggested Readings: Isaiah 9:2-7; St. Luke 2:1-11

A little girl once asked, "Daddy, what can I give God for Christmas?" Her father, realizing that God was a very real person to his daughter, said, "Give of yourself." This Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, it might be well for us to adopt the naivete of a child and ask, "What can I give God for Christmas?" The answer will be the same, "Give of yourself."

In observing Christmas it is fitting that we remember friends and loved ones with gifts of material things, for this is symbolic of the gift God gave to man. But the gifts we give are not of a lasting nature; gloves wear out, ties go out of style, and money is spent. The things of real value can be given every day. The kind word, the outstretched hand of fellowship, help when it's needed, and our generous friendship . . . each of these is a form of giving of one's self.

We can give each of these things daily, but still we have not given the greatest, most needed gift of which we are capable. Each person who lives in harmony with God has it within his power to give a gift of inestimable value and of infinite duration. This great gift consists of simply inviting another to share with you the peace and happiness that come from God's great love.

Imagine, if you will, what a turmoil your own life would be if you still believed that man is always sufficient unto himself, and you had no one to turn to in time of fear, doubt or trouble. Imagine, if you will, what it would be like to live with the ultimate frustration of believing that when your body breathed its last, that is the end . . . there is no more. What a purposeless existence!

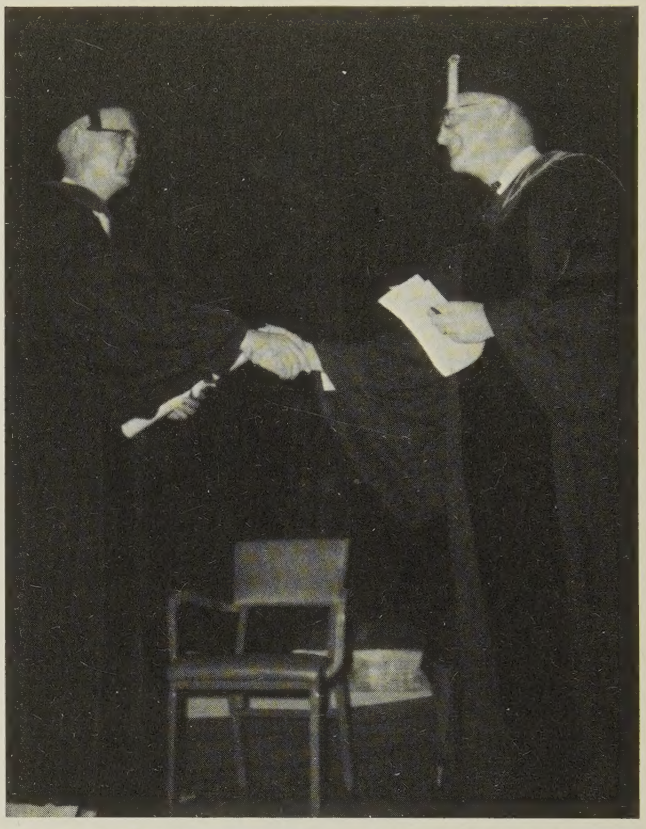
And yet you can count among your acquaintances men and women who lead such lives. And from your hands some of them will receive beautifully wrapped Christmas presents. How much better it would be if you would also include your greatest gift . . . the invitation to share with you the bounty of God's love.

Some will laugh and scorn you. Forgive them and try again. You will be giving of yourself. Others are waiting and searching for something better to do with their lives. They will readily accept your gift. Giving it to them may be as easy as saying, "Come to church with me this Sunday!"

If you truly harbor the love of Jesus within yourself, you *must* give it away. You *cannot* keep it. By sharing it with others you are giving of yourself and you will be doubly blessed. Such a gift is twofold. It is a gift to man . . . and your greatest gift to God. "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

A Christmas Prayer. "Almighty God, who hast declared Thy love for all mankind in the birth of Thy holy Child: help us this day to worship Him. Let the beauty of Christmas descend upon us and the blessing of it remain with us; in His name. Amen."

NEWS NOTES



Honorary Degree for Rev. Erwin A. Britton. Piedmont College, Demorest, Georgia, awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity to Rev. Erwin A. Britton, pastor of the Congregational Church of Wayne, Michigan, at the Commencement exercises in August, 1961.

Pastoral Changes. Rev. William Randall, who has been serving the Congregational Church in Sharon, Pennsylvania and the Slope Congregational Church, Brookfield, Ohio, has accepted a call to the Jackson Avenue Church in Muskegon, Michigan . . . The First Congregational Church of Farmington, New Hampshire, has extended a call to Rev. Joseph Simone of Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, and he started his new pastorate on November 5. Rev. Dudley W. Wiegand of Topsfield, Massachusetts, has been serving as Interim Supply at Farmington . . . Rev. Charles L. Atkins of Northford, Connecticut, has accepted a call to the First Congregational Church, Eliot, Maine, and will begin his duties there on January 1, 1962 . . . The First Congregational Church of Calais, Maine, has called Rev. Donald F. Osborne of Stony Creek, Connecticut, and he will begin work there on January 1, 1962.

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FROM THE LETTER BOX

Editor: THE CONGREGATIONALIST:

The letter from Rev. David Nelson Beach, printed in the September issue of THE CONGREGATIONALIST convinced me, and I hope that it has helped to convince every reader — that there are great purposes to be attained by our financial support for the case for free and responsible churchmanship.

Scratching the surface of each of Dr. Beach's arguments uncovers deeper reasons for reversing his conclusions. However, the best reason Dr. Beach unwittingly provides for rejecting his own advice is inherent in the very fact of his giving advice on this matter at all. His effort presupposes the freedom of the individual to think, to decide, to choose to spend or not to spend for a legal determination of the issues. He could not expect the same hearing within the framework of the very institution for which he writes. He knows that the rule, there, is litigation financed by expropriation of mission funds, rather than by personal donations. I urge your readers to freely give, that this freedom of individual decision may be preserved.

When the free church polity won in the Cadman case did Dr. Beach write to the General Council Executive Committee to urge that it not spend any more mission fund money on an appeal?

Did he ask, "What chance do future suits have of setting these points (the then res judicata) aside"? Does he now write to the members of the present power bloc behind the United Curtain to urge them not to spend the money taken from the free churches on further litigation against the Churches of Christ? Does he tell them that the amount already spent out of the mission fund is enough and that "Surely there are better places for us to spend the money entrusted (e.g. mission funds, Dr. Beach?) to us as stewards for Christ"?

When the free church polity won in the Cadman case, did Dr. Beach, "question the moral value of further litigation" or "whether such legal coercion accords with the mutual respect we have for the opinions of others and which we expect for our views"? And now when Dr. Beach raises the spectre of legal coercion, could he not say a few words, with pertinent examples, about the more devastating and demoralizing extra-legal coercion through the hierarchical control of retirement benefits, funds, communications, selection of "representative" personnel at meetings on boards and instrumentalities, and ministerial career programming?

Unless Dr. Beach in the past has appealed to the Organizationalists as he does now to the Congregationalists, it is apparent that his advice is an outgrowth of a double standard whereby the moral quality and financial responsibility of litigation depends upon whether his opinion of the issues prevails.

I urge your readers to reject the assertion that to pursue the adjudication of the property rights of the free Churches through the system of courts provided by our society for the vindication of such rights is or will be unworthy, un-Christian, or unsuccessful.

I urge your readers to demonstrate by their gifts to this cause, that they reject the Organizationalist propositions that their might makes right, that their bigness banishes badness, and that it is immoral to question their usurpation of authority and breach of trust in the forms provided by law.

Would you please provide us with an address to which we may send our contributions for this essential work in the support of the Churches of Christ?

Enfield, Connecticut JAMES WARREN SHERMAN

(Editor's Note. Contributions for the law case may be sent to the Committee for Continuation of Congregational Christian Churches, c/o Dr. Howell D. Davies, Room 2308, 100 North La Salle Street, Chicago 2, Illinois.)

Editor: THE CONGREGATIONALIST:

May I say "Thank You" in your columns to the many Congregational pastors who have mailed me bulletins and brochures from their churches? As a retired aging pastor and unhappily a member of a "yes" voting church (the vote was two to one) it has been really exciting to know that so many fine churches are dedicated to Congregational freedom, — a leaven sorely needed in the Christian world of today. And these churches are but a small sample.

It appears that most pastors have been able to obtain the vote they desired while they in turn have consciously or subconsciously betrayed conscience in favor of conformity. There are exceptions, of course. No doubt many of the brethren really believe in bigness and authoritarianism. The tide will turn!

Sanford, Maine REV. J. ALBERT HAMMOND

NEWS NOTES

Historian Requests Records. All Congregational Christian Churches which are making special plans to preserve and to promote our Congregational freedom and fellowship are invited to write Rev. Harry W. Johnson, 1301 North Fifteenth Street, Boise, Idaho. Dr. Johnson, our Historian, wants to compile a record of all such activities even though they are not directly related to the National Association.

Improvements at Arbor Grove. The Arbor Grove Congregational Church, Jackson, Michigan, has re-painted the interior of its house of worship, installed twenty oak pews to replace the chairs previously used, and laid new carpeting. Exterior improvements include landscaping. Rev. Robert Haldane, Jr. is pastor.

More Churches Join National Association. Clerk's statements have been received at the Milwaukee office that the Churches in Dalton and Randolph, Wisconsin, and the Greeneville Church of Norwich, Connecticut, have voted to join the National Association.